

# News Release



USDA Forest Service  
Pacific Northwest Region



USDI Bureau of Land Management  
Oregon/Washington

Contacts: Tom Knappenberger, 503.808.2241  
Maya Fuller, 503.808.6437

## **Northwest Forest Plan – Draft Supplemental EIS Released for Public Review and Comment**

**PORTLAND, OR** – June 29, 2006 - The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the USDA Forest Service have released a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. This document provides new information and analyses for about 295 species, the status of Northwest Forest Plan Reserves, revised wildland and prescribed fire analysis, as well as a discussion of the likely role of Survey and Manage species on ecosystem function.

The Agencies developed a Draft Supplement to the 2004 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (2004 FSEIS) in order to correct deficiencies found by the U.S. District Court Judge Marsha J. Pechman though many key aspects of the 2004 FSEIS were affirmed by the judge including the rationale for the FSEIS and the range of actions considered.

The Draft Supplement addresses three issues cited by Judge Pechman in an August 1, 2005 ruling in *Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Mark Rey et al.*:

1. Forest Service and BLM must analyze potential impacts to Survey and Manage species if they are not added to or if they are removed from agencies' Special Status program;
2. The agencies must provide a thorough analysis of their assumption that late-successional reserves (forest set-asides to promote old growth habitat) would adequately protect species that the Survey and Manage standard was introduced to protect;
3. The agencies must disclose and analyze flaws in their methodology for calculating the acreage in need of hazardous fuel treatments.

The Draft Supplemental EIS Notice of Availability will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 7, 2006. This marks the beginning of the 90-day public comment period and will close October 5, 2006. The Agencies ask that those submitting comments on the Draft Supplement make them as specific as possible.

The 2004 FSEIS seeks to replace the Northwest Forest Plan's Survey and Manage requirements for old-growth-dependant species with other elements of the Northwest Forest Plan along with Forest Service Sensitive Species and BLM Special Status Species policies – plans for protecting sensitive species that were in place before the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan. The Northwest Ecosystem Alliance lawsuit challenged that proposed management change, resulting in the current supplement to “fix” the three identified issues.

The 2004 FSEIS came as a result of a settlement of a lawsuit brought by the Douglas (Oregon) Timber Operators against the Forest Service and BLM. Judge Pechman's order affected all agency projects that disturbed habitat for Survey and Manage species in western Washington, Oregon and northern California.

The Draft Supplement can be viewed at <http://www.reo.gov/s-m2006/index.htm>